



CONFIDENCE NEWS

November 2010

THIS EDITION...

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Advancements

OS2 Craig Rooke
ME2 Kevin Steed
FN Nicholas Rodriguez
SN Bradley Nicolini

Welcome Aboard

CDR Matthew Meilstrup
LCDR Mark Graboski
LT David Ober
LT Edward Dipierro
LT Robert Wright
LT Amy Sung
LT Miles Young
LTJG Bryan Crook
ENS Eric Balcunas
AMT1 Clark Nygaard
AET1 Robert Teal
AMT2 Andrew Furek
AET3 James Saleeby
AET3 Ryan Bolohan
AMT3 Paul Suarez
ME1 Karl Mailander
MK1 Chad Reel
DC2 Adam Brown (TAD)
SN James Poe
SN Christopher Taylor

Captain's Cabin

Happy November everybody!

We're very excited to be returning in time for the holidays. We've had a very productive and interesting patrol. You'd be extremely proud of the work that your Coast Guardsmen completed. I am.

The highlights of the patrol are well-outlined throughout this newsletter and were probably passed to you from one of our numerous stops in Gitmo or via email (thanks IT1 Matt Luce for keeping us connected). From enforcing the country's immigration laws by interdicting and repatriating illegal migrants to conducting two SAR cases to assisting in the post-hurricane response in Haiti, the CONFIDENCE crew has professionally executed every assigned mission. Add in all of the XO's drills and training and it has indeed been a jam-packed patrol.

We were able to take advantage of all our Gitmo time to conduct mooring/unmoorings by all the OODs, towed and refueled two CG patrol boats, and launched/recovered our embarked helicopter from Traverse City, Michigan almost 200 times. The qualification achievements from this patrol are amazing and far too numerous for me to list. Outstanding job to all!

We won't forget the "Respect mons" from every street vendor in Ocho Rios, the Mustache Militia, the jerk chicken, OPS' trivia nights, the South Gym workout gang, our very own legal staff, Team REPO, 14 fish landed, Master Blaster's chef guidance, paintball skirmishes or the scintillating 36-35 intra-ship softball game (can't say defense is our strong point).

A special thanks to the aviators from Air Station Traverse City and DC2 Adam Brown from Station Lake Worth Inlet. They made major contributions on our patrol and are all welcome to sail with us again. Kudos to all of the CONFIDENCE cooks for making this a thoroughly enjoyable (and slightly fattening) patrol.

Enjoy the inport and upcoming Holiday Season. I hope to meet many of you on the 18 December dependents' cruise.

Very Respectfully,

CDR Matt Meilstrup

xO's Ramblings

We didn't have many people coming and going during this period, so instead of my usual list of personnel I'm changing things up a little this time. I thought everyone at home would like to see all of the "hard work" that is being accomplished while the crew of CONFIDENCE is at sea. Since I'm originally from Missouri, the Show-Me state, I thought it best to "show" how busy we've been on patrol. :)

Newly Reported Personnel



ENS Balcunas—Using his Big-Boy Voice



MK1 Reel—Hanging on the Fantail



ME1 Mailander—Weapons Hot!

Departures



We lost this one during the patrol; if seen please inform ENS Morgan!



ET2 Whitcomb—Good luck at school





Be safe on the roads for the Holidays!

LCDR Steve Miller, Executive Officer Stephen.A.Miller@uscg.mil

Chief's Mess

Command Chiefs Corner

Good day from the Command Chiefs Corner. Well another patrol complete and thankfully in time for the holidays. It is good for the crew to be able to spend time with friends and family during this time of the year. This patrol saw the crew of the CONFIDENCE participate in the recovery effort after Hurricane Tomas made its way through the Caribbean and finally making its way through the windward straits between Cuba and Haiti. The CONFIDENCE crew responded to the change with a positive attitude and made strides to make the best of the situation.

I know that the crew is eagerly waiting the time when they will be able to go home and see their loved ones again. I would like to thank you, the families, for all of the support and caring that you show for the crew during their times away from home.

The Chief's Mess was able to leave one of its members behind this patrol so he may attend the Coast Guard's Senior Leadership Academy. To attend a Leadership Academy is a very big step in an enlisted member's career. Attendance ensures that the member will be eligible to advance to the rank of Senior Chief. This winter two more of our members will be attending the class in order to advance and move on to the next pay grade.

That is all for this addition of the Chief's Corner. Until next time this is the Command Chief signing off. I hope that life is treating you well. Take care.

MKC Robert Capps
Command Chief
USCGC CONFIDENCE



ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

Greetings from the bottom of the boat! Families and friends, it's a great feeling to be back home, out of harms way, and away from the vile tendencies of Chuck the Chinchilla. Allow us to elaborate. For those wondering, the legend of Charles E. "Chuck" Chinchilla is not a myth. He is a living, breathing, organism who feeds on our tools, tampers with our reefer compressors, and floods our aft steering bilge. Indeed, Chuck is a force not to be reckoned with. But in case you were wondering what overwhelming power can stop this furry ball of darkness, say hello to the "Patrol 'Stache". For seven weeks, we put aside our pride and our stubbornness, and let this minor inconvenience bind us together to fight off Chuck while increasing the morale within our department. Together, we worked hard, studied hard, and trained each other in various competencies. All together, this patrol has been a memorable one. Despite the long hours and hard labor that never seemed to end, the engineers some how found the time to help one another. It's clear to everyone that our success as a department is because of how we see and treat one another. We've learned to recognize each other first as people, second as shipmates, and third by our respective rates and grades. From 'staches to ashes, the engineers pulled together and got the job done this patrol. As LT Jeff "Whiskers" Payne would say, "GAME ON!"

First, we'd like to recognize DC2 Adam Brown for joining us this patrol. DC2 is currently stationed at USCG Station Lake Worth Inlet, but was assigned to sail with us for only this patrol. He has been a great addition to our crew as he immediately got qualified and gave 110% at every task he was assigned. His awesome attitude allowed everyone to see the brighter side of any situation. Thank you for your camaraderie! We all wish you fair winds and following seas!

A special shout out to DCC Kenny Lindsey and DC2 A.J. Joglar. These gentlemen were unfortunately not able to share this patrol with us, but we look forward to catching up with them soon. Enjoy your time at home!

Now, we'd like to recognize those who qualified in different watch stations this patrol:

Auxiliary (AUX): Though it is the first of many qualifications, it is also one of the most important responsibilities onboard as the Aux Watch is the eyes and hears of the ship. Congratulations to DC2 Brown.

Throttlemen: Without a doubt, the Throttleman qualification is one of the most difficult qualifications onboard as they are required to know almost as much as an EOW. Because of our late nights of hard studying, the Throttlemen watch section is currently running ten men strong! Congratulations to the newly qualified MK2 Daire, EM2 Kotter, DC3 Aguirre, MK3 Deaton, and ENS Knight.

Engineer of the Watch (EOW): If you can survive and thrive as a throttle watch, you may be ready for EOW. Congratulations to EMC Valenzuela for being Underway and Inport EOW qualified.

Lastly, we'd like to congratulate those who will soon be advancing in pay grade. Great job to DC3 Aguirre for passing his Rating End of Course test as well as FN Thomas and FN Larsen for being accepted to Machinery Technician "A" School. Also, shout out to FN Bakels for completing all of his prerequisites for striking DC3. Last, but not least, we'd like to wish MK2 Daire, MK3 Edwards, and EM3 Fontenot good luck on their Service Wide Exams. You're all very deserving of your current and future accomplishments and we know that you'll strive throughout your careers.

Stay Thirsty Engineers. Enjoy homeport!

Operations Department Porthole



Another safe and successful D7 patrol complete. Our ET's, BM's, OS's, GM1, ME1, and IT1 did a great job in the last fifty-something days at sea. From malfunctioning bridge equipment to jammed weapons to server meltdowns, they all went above and beyond to ensure CONFIDENCE was operating.

WEPS guys had their hands full during this patrol between gunnery and law enforcement training. We fired our new 25mm deck gun for the first time, but the firework display came to a quick halt with a pretty solid gun jam. They worked hard for the next night and day, under red light and hot sun, trying to clear her. They also successfully trained on our M240 machine gun during one of our gunnery exercises. We conducted law enforcement training and even got to conduct a boarding. We also had migrants onboard where crew stood watch. We even got our TAD lawyers and pilots involved as migrant watchstanders.

CIC did a phenomenal job keeping up communications with various aircraft and units despite lack of an air search radar and internet at times. The behind the scenes work by our ETs, IT1, ME1, OS's really makes the D7 patrol run smoother. We spent many days operating in charge of multiple ships and aircraft. OS2 Rooke qualified as Landing Signal Officer. We had to say goodbye to OS1 Pankey towards the end of patrol so he could have surgery. We wish he has a successful surgery and recovery and is back to work in no time.

Special thanks goes out to the BM Navigators; without them we'd be lost. Most of us know how tedious chart corrections and writing proper logs can be. Thanks go out to BM2 Spann and BM2 Woodcock for getting the job done as well as our additional Navigator watchstanders. During special sea detail we did a lot of drills regarding navigation, which allowed for plenty of practice and quick-paced challenges. It's no easy task to coordinate two bearing takers to work a fix, find out distances to hazards, turns and navigation aids, time to turns, and recommended courses to steer while information is being thrown at you like you're a clown in a dunk tank. A couple of qualifications to note are BM2 Spann as coxswain and BMC Reed as Helicopter Control Officer.

It is with great sadness that we include news of the death of Paul the Octopus. The ET Shop was deeply mournful of this. Nevertheless, they trucked on, fixing everything that seemed to break; most electronics on the boat have a history with the ET's. ET1 Jarvis always had the answer to fixing something, even if he couldn't fix it. As a whole, the ET's maintained a healthy training schedule in Rock Band to win this patrol's concert. Their very creative Halloween costumes helped add to the suspense as they rocked out to a beautiful rendition of Aerosmith's "Crying". ET3 Konnyu stepped up and took over as Duty ET, and ET2 Whitcomb had his last hooray with the unit. Sadly, ET2 is leaving us, but he's leaving to pursue his education and we bid him farewell and good luck.

One member of the Operations Department gets his own paragraph: IT1 Matthew Luce. He alone helps us stay connected with you. Without his skills and dedication, we would be without internet, unable to communicate with family and unable to carry out our mission. He sacrificed his personal time in port to hunt down a switch for the ship's server- he luckily found one in Jamaica. IT1 spent countless hours doctoring our server and keeping everyone happy, all the while getting other qualifications done such as CIC watchstander and Basic Damage Control PQS. The guy deserves some quality time off- as does the whole entire crew!



Deck Department

From SN Bradley Nicolini, Deck Force Public Affairs Representative:

As he constantly reminded us this patrol, the most important thing to ever happen to deck force was the metamorphosis of SN Jerry to LSN. He is an inspiration to us all and reminds us that we can do whatever we put our minds to. Thank you for your daily leadership and professionalism. Good luck breaking-in as OOD.

This patrol we found ourselves in the Windward Passage (as we commonly do). Our fantastic voyage led us to many foreign port calls such as GTMO, GTMO, GTMO... Ocho Rios, Jamaica, and finally another sweet GTMO port call. Our first major evolution was an astern tow with CGC NANTUCKET ISLAND. Crewmembers on the flight deck made popcorn to enjoy the circus show put on by SA Deroulac and SN Nicolini. The wind was fierce that day and although they had difficulty throwing over to the NANTUCKET, our resident strong-man, SN Rinaldi, proudly displayed how his dedication to numerous hours of heaving line training could pay off. He mustered his strength and threw the heaving line with an angelic throw that landed gracefully on the forecastle of the NANTUCKET. SN Rinaldi's throw had everyone paralyzed as if we had seen a siren, a siren named Maximus Rinaldi. Later in the patrol during our second refueling evolution with the CGC KNIGHT ISLAND, things went entirely more smoothly as we passed the towline on the first attempt by LSN Jerry.

This patrol SN Nicolini, LSN Jerry, and SN Rinaldi all had a chance to show former Bahrain tactical .50 cal machine gun shooter, FS1 Krusko, how to properly mow down targets during a scheduled gunnery exercise. Although FS1 Krusko demonstrated his ability to *not* hit anything, the training alone was worth being out in the hot sun, suited and booted. One new thing to the majority of deck force was hosting an HH-65 Dolphin deployed from Air Station Traverse City, Michigan. Many members obtained a helicopter tie down qualification, including SN Joseph, SN Rinaldi, SN King, SN Paridon, SA Deroulac, SN Tallyn, SN Roberts, and SA Hutchinson. These qualifications were put to the test after the many tiring evolutions on the flight deck day in and day out. Having the helo onboard helped CONFIDENCE interdict many migrants that were later repatriated to their respective countries. On the bright side of having a helo on board, members of Deck Force such as SN Rinaldi, SN Poe, SN Roberts and SN Nicolini all had the opportunity to join the flight crew on a morale flight around Haiti. While patrolling, twice we thought we stumbled across narcotics on two separate occasions. Unfortunately, our efforts only produced a T.V. and a bail of tarps. We acquired 5 Haitian migrants from the CGC BEAR and took them back to Cap Haitien. We later acquired 19 Haitian migrants from the NANTUCKET. While headed to Haiti to repatriate our guests, SN Paridon spotted a small rustic boat with 11 Cuban migrants on board whom we interdicted and later transferred to be returned to Cuba.

In other news, BM2 Hahner qualified as an inport OOD and underway OOD, a remarkable feat for a second class petty officer. He stands as an inspiration to the rest of Deck Force to never stop dreaming.

From ENS Daffer, First Lieutenant:

Another patrol aboard CONFIDENCE fades into Coast Guard lore. Deck Force enjoyed success across a broad spectrum of personal and unit accomplishments that saw our department rise to daily prominence. Following a grueling inport that included preparing CONFIDENCE for her Change of Command, we embarked on what was to be a busy patrol of astern refuels, small boat operations, helicopter evolutions, and assisting Haiti with storm recovery in the wake of Tomas. In continuing our tradition of training excellence, our guys worked hard to achieve one qualification in basic damage control and five in advanced damage control. Seven members qualified as GPOWs, eight as helicopter tiedown members, four as rescue swimmer tenders, four as cutter surface swimmers, one as a linehandler, one as a flight deck fire party member, two as helmsman & lookouts, two as davit operators, and one as inport OOD. Seven of our guys were placed on 'A' School lists and three completed their applications for advancement to E-3. Our new Leading Seaman, Kirk Jerry, exemplified peer leadership on a daily basis and received numerous compliments from his fellow deckies. SN Rinaldi and SN Poe achieved the unthinkable: documented praise from our much admired yet notoriously difficult to impress FS1, Matt Krusko. Each day this group of intelligent, hard-working, and talented individuals proves unequivocally that we are the preeminent Deck Force in the fleet. I could not be more proud to be a part of this team.



SUPPLY DEPARTMENT

Hello again from the Supply Department. It is almost Thanksgiving and this year has been a busy one. With our Fall Patrol mostly behind us now, and our next inport within our sights we can look forward to the Holidays.

We have had many unexpected turns and twists since we left homeport back in September, but our SK Division has expertly managed logistic runs for our many stops in GTMO. SK1 Malik and SK3 Titus spent most of their off time, during the four BSF's and 2 port calls getting everything needed to keep us mission ready and running smooth. They made sure we had the vans for liberty, the fuel for the engineers, and the replenishment of office and MAA supplies. To top it all off the SK's also had to tend with the end of the year closeout, ending within an amazing .03% of our allotted budget.

Within the FS Division it was also extremely busy with the extra crew and migrant ops. Being at full complement gave FS1 Krusko time to lead as FSO for the patrol. He made sure that the crew had plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables and plenty of candy on Halloween. He also took part in all LE boardings, and provided armed sentry watch for over 25 migrants while also ensuring they were fed twice a day. FS2 Hickman continues to bake crowd pleasing breads and cakes now that he has taken over the role as Jack of the dust and Mid-Rats cook. He also has expertly maintained all the Food Storage spaces and inventory paperwork so that we remain ready for any unexpected changes.

HS2 Gillard will finish out his second patrol, and should be proud. Many of us owe him for his prompt medical procedures and advice. His days as a young independent duty corpsman included suturing open wounds, splinting fractured ankles and administering IV's. At the same time he managed to become advanced DC qualified and is almost ready for his inport GPOW board. HS2 also had to brief the entire crew on the Cholera outbreak that occurred in Haiti in October. He was commended for his expertise knowledge and overall readiness by a visiting medical team from District Seven. HS2 also provided hours of mentoring to his two strikers whenever they were not standing watch.

YN1 Andreu also has his second patrol under his belt, and his accurate and timely administration of all the TAD personnel, including two AVDET's and five riders from various Caribbean nations was only part of his job as independent duty yeoman. His interpreting skills were invaluable during the many sightings and boardings and AMIO operations. He also tactfully monitored the transfer of 25 migrants and worked closely with our temporary migrant experts helping to achieve a flawless transfer and repatriation of our guests back to their country.

Once again, we are closing a very successful patrol. Thank you to everyone back home, because couldn't have done it without your support.

FSC Ashton

SHOUT OUTS

"Change your oil" - ME1

An OPS guy wants everyone to remember to "Feed your Fish"
...your seven-day beta food ran out 6 weeks ago.

Occasional

Excursions

WHAT HAPPENS IN RIU STAYS AT RIU

The Moving Gas Station

Krystle and Hailey,

*I love and miss you two very much,
and I'm always thinking about you.*

*Love,
Todd*



*"Clear by RADAR, with the exception of 16 small contacts
-Head ET*

Andrea,

*I bet you're gonna smile after reading this...
I love you!*

Eric ☺

CONFIDENCE in the NEWS

If you see your loved ones on news or articles in the local newspapers, please record them on media or cut out the clips and send them to work with your Coastie so that we can keep them on file to share in future newsletters.

You can also see multiple press releases about the crew and their efforts at:

Coast Guard District 7 Public Affairs www.d7publicaffairs.com

USCG Visual Information Gallery http://cgvi.uscg.mil/media/main.php?g2_itemId=1044782

Florida Today [Coast Guard 'Confidence' returning to Port Canaveral](#)

Wadisasternews.com [Coast Guard interdicts, repatriates 11 Cuban migrants](#)

Wadisasternews.com [Coast Guard repatriates 19 Haitian migrants](#)

CoastGuardNews.com [Coast Guard Cutter Confidence returns to homeport after 55-day patrol](#)

Alertcarolina.unc.edu [Coast Guard Cutter returns to homeport after 55-day patrol](#)

CONFIDENCE is also noted on websites such as texvet.com, militarywoman.org, and Soldier of Fortune magazine online.

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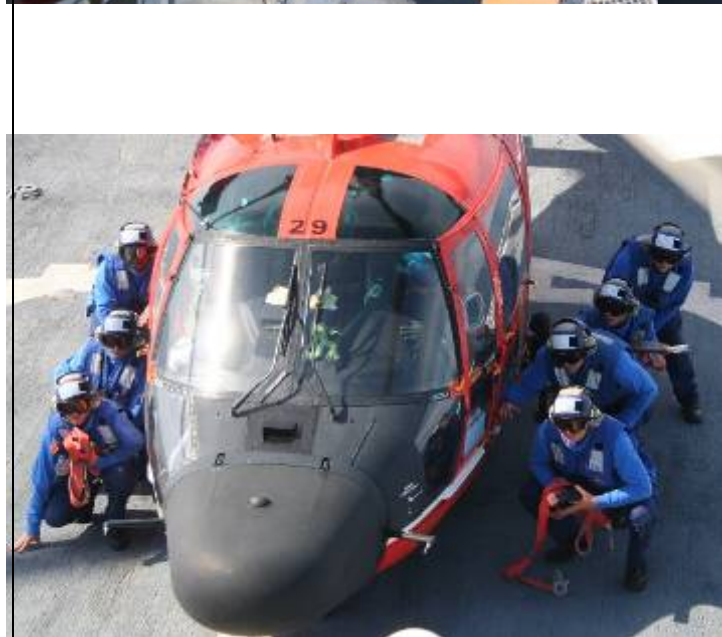
A Look At the Patrol

BOAT OPS...

Photos by IT1 Luce, ET1 Jarvis, and ENS Balcunas



HELO OPS...



HELO OPS...



Fueling At Sea



~SWIM CALLLL~



HAPPY HALLOWEEN!!

